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ABSTRACT

A case study of a mixed comprehensive school with an age range of 11-16 investigates the management of the first externally imposed change on the secondary school system during the years 1987-89. Implemented in 1986, the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) is a national examination for all 16-year-olds delivered through the subjects of the curriculum. An interactionist micropolitical approach is used to understand organizational implementation processes from individual definitions of the situation and as a political activity. Participant observation and interviews with Curriculum Team Leaders (CTLs), the school Head, and administrative staff generated information about the effects of the new GCSE requirements on school management and personnel responses. Findings indicate that CTLs rely on interpersonal processes stressing collegiality to manage inherent role conflicts. Lukes' (1974) three-dimensional view of power is applied to examine the ways in which social forces, institutional practices, and individual decisions exclude potential issues from politics. Although observable conflict may be avoided, an implicit references to potential conflict remains. CTLs in these situations feel alienated from the dominant hierarchical power structure. Viewing the implementation of change from a micropolitical perspective highlights the degree to which leaders have experienced a decline in freedom of expression. Heads of departments in their new role of CTLs have become curriculum managers instead of initiators. An awareness of their situation combined with a sense of powerlessness has contributed to professional compliance, which heralds the first stage of the teacher as technical worker. (9 references) (LMI)

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COMPLEXITIES AND COMPROMISES

THE NEW ERA AT PARKVIEW SCHOOL

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Complexities and Compromises: The New Era at Parkview School

This paper draws from data collected for a case study that is concerned with investigating the managing of the first externally imposed change that was introduced across the whole secondary school in 1986: the General Certificate of Secondary Education. The study mainly centres on the processes of managing the implementation of this change over a two year period 1987-1989 so has taken in also the imposition of further educational changes that have altered the working lives of school teachers - the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act 1987 and the Education Reform Act (England and Wales) 1988.

The study was undertaken from an interactionist perspective, influenced by Herbert Blumer.

> Under the perspective of symbolic interaction, social action is lodged in acting individuals who fit their respective lines of action to one another through the process of interpretation; group action is the collective action of individuals. (1969:84)

From this perspective, then, the reality of the organisation is located in the actions of the members that make up the organisation.

Of central significance is that human beings have selves - 'that they act by making indications to themselves' (Blumer 1969:83). Therefore it follows that in order to understand the processes of managing within the institution it is necessary to ascertain the meanings that the participants attribute to their actions.

I view managing within this perspective as 'problematic', seeking to discover how the participants construe notions of managing. Such a view allows for the possibility of analysing the data in such a way as to gain access to the micropolitics of the school. This paper focuses on this dimension.

Micropolitics/Management

Before going into the empirical data I feel that I need to make explicit my interpretation of what constitutes a micropolitical perspective. In order to do so I draw on the work of Bacharach, Lawler, Hoyle and Ball to help me articulate my position.

Engagement in management activities inextricably incorporates micropolitical processes. Cuthbert (1984) defines management as 'a process of engaging in or regulating conflict, bargaining, power and exchange'. Lawler and Bacharach (1983) define micropolitics as 'concerned with the actions of particular actors attempting to deal with the opposition from other actors'. Whereas Hoyle (1986), in discussing the dimensions of micropolitics states that:

> Micropolitics is best perceived as a continuum, one end of which is virtually indistinguishable from conventional management procedures but from which it diverges on a number of dimensions - interests, interest sets, power, strategies and legitimacy - to the point where it constitutes almost a separte organisational world of illegitimate, self-interest manipulation.

Bacharach and Lawler (1980) state that 'in educational organisations participants can be conceived as political actors with their own needs, objectives and strategies to achieve their objectives'.

These definitions of management and micropolitics highlight the interactive dimensions of organisational life. They are both concerned with the way people relate to one another in order to fulfil their own goals. People work at creating an environment that makes sense for them so that they can realise their objectives. The notion of the uniqueness of the individual is implied with each individual constructing their own reality. Different people have different and varying meanings and objectives as well as different accesses to

power and resources within the organisation. The organisation is constructed out of the socially maintained beliefs about how people should relate to one another and how they may attain desired goals. Within the school context these beliefs include an awareness of the power differentials in the organisation and the professional roles and status positions that people hold. As Hoyle (82) states:

> ...micropolitics can be said to consist of the strategies by which individuals and groups in organisational contexts seek to use their resources of authority and influence to further their interests.

He goes on to suggest that it may be argued that this is simply a definition of management.

Managing involves people in making decisions. The micropolitical perspective recognises the centrality of power and conflict. Decision-making can often appear to be the rational outcome of consensus. However Baldridge et al (1978 p 33-34) claim that 'consensus actually represents the prevalence of one group over another'. Ball (87) provides empirical data that supports his claim that 'decision-making is not an abstract, rational process which can be plotted on an organisational map, it is a political process, it is the stuff of micro-political activity.

Decision-making among people with different (as well as similar) vested interests is obviously central to a study on the processes of the implementation of, what the school consider to be, a major change. The study is primarily concerned with describing the form and style of the implementation process through teasing out of the participants the values, beliefs and meanings of their actions within this social context. In the interview data the teachers talk about their feelings and experiences and this illuminates the differences between their view of the situation and others. They 'let me in' to their insecurities and anxieties. They explain the

reasons why they act the way they do. They articulated their beliefs and spoke of the constraints they believe they work in and the nature of the relationships they have with others. I was researching at the end of Hoyle's continuum where managing and micropolitics 'can be virtually coterminous'. I take the stance that an open and inclusive definition of micropolitics can be seen to be synonymous with the exploration of the social dynamics of managing.

A final point that is important to make before embarking on the empirical data is the issue of the interface between the social dynamics of the institution and the educational policies and politics of the wider community. As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the externally imposed curriculum change, the GCSE that is the focus of my study was introduced just prior to other major educational initiatives and so is affected by the major upheaval caused by the radical change in the education service. Data collecting took place at the time when the changes involved with the 1988 Education Reform Act were 'in the wind' but not yet implemented in the school.

Ball (1987) states his position clearly:

> I take schools to be arenas of struggle, to be riven with actual and potential conflict between members; to be poorly co-ordinated; to be ideologically diverse. I take it to be essential that if we are to understand the nature of schools as organisations, we must achieve some understanding of these conflicts.

I venture to suggest that in order to understand the meaning and dynamics of management then it is also necessary to understand these conflicts. In this paper I present empirical data of one school drawing from the concepts developed by Ball (1987) of control, ideology, interests and power in order to give analytical purchase on the theme of managing externally imposed curriculum change.

A Case Study of Parkview School

Parkview school is an 11-16 mixed comprehensive school (960 pupils on roll) formed from an amalgamation of two single sex secondary schools in 1975. The buildings are old, with each main building surrounded by classroom huts, some of which were originally erected as a temporary measure but have now become a permanent feature. The upper school building is built in a square with a central quadrangle open to the sky. The corridors are little more than covered ways, open to the elements. The school serves an area to the west of a south-west of England county town (population 25,000 inhabitants) consisting of primarily four villages and part of the town itself. The socio-economic background of the families sending children to the school is predominantly skilled manual and lower professional. There is a net inflow of population into the area and the school has grown from a six form entry to an eight form entry.

THE LITTLE MUSEUM

In order to understand the social dynamics of the organisation it is important to indicate the context in which the processes addressed, operate. The deputy headteacher in charge of curriculum, who was appointed by the previous Headteacher gives a flavour of the general culture of the school prior to the arrival of the present Head.

> Because he (the previous Head) was coming up to retirement and because he had been through one sort of trauma (the re-organisation to a comprehensive school in 1975) he played down change. There were changes but on the whole it was a very steady kind of school, most things had been established for some time and so it was quiet and stable.

A longstanding member of staff who has taught in the school since the amalgamation in 1975 said in interview:

> Here we were like a little museum where we were preserved under a glass cover then suddenly someone smashed the glass ...

That someone was the new Head, appointed in 1985.

The new Head's perception of the school is as follows:

> I came to the school in 1985 that had been led by a headteacher who had been here for 17 years. There had been very little staff turnover over the previous ten years since the re-organisation and I think only eight of the staff were younger than me. It was a very self-contented staff, very happy with one another, very cosy, basking in a reflected glow of success in terms of public esteem without perceiving the need to change and without having been part of or party to any of the current developments in education. I found a very very low level of knowledge of modern thinking, of current thinking, not only amongst the general staff but also among the heads of department and the deputies. Worse I found there was no staff handbook laying down procedures, no aims of the school that people understood and no staff records I could refer to that identified what training people had done, what qualifications they had or anything like that. It was almost as though my predecessor had managed the place 'on the hoof' so to speak so I really did feel I was starting from scratch.

The Head defines his management style as

> tends to be quite powerful and leadership orientated. I don't seek to be, in any sense, autocratic and I want to share decision-making all the time but I am continually reminded of the inability of others in the organisation to share that decision-making either because they are too rushed off their feet to get involved in issues which is a real problem in schools or because they haven't had the experience or the training themselves or haven't really perceived their role in terms of sharing.

From a micro-political perspective what he is saying can be interpreted as:

1. 'rushed off their feet' - the majority of the teachers' time is spent in isolation from other adults, ie one adult in front of a group of children. The central issue here is the resource of time to think and reflect as well as communicate with other adults.

2. 'lack of experience and training' - teachers lack knowledge surrounding the issues and lack of interpersonal (micro-political!) skills to push their own views and to generate, with others, an alternative perspective to challenge the prevailing one.

3. 'haven't really perceived their own role in terms of sharing' - the teachers are locked into a role perspective that is about acceptance of the lines of authority and concentrating on executing the task of teaching and administration.

This information is borne out by the following data collected in interviews from the Head and his senior management team. When he came to the school in 1985, he had a particular concept of leadership.

> I knew when I came exactly what I wanted to be like. I wanted to be a fellow professional leading professionals. My ideal role model is to take my coat off, role up my sleeves and sit in curriculum planning groups with people to thrash out what we are going to do and so on.

However, in practice, he has found that he cannot operate in this way for two main reasons. The first is because

> I believe there is a low level of awareness among the majority of staff about the fundamental issues the school had to address and I found myself leading more and more, not in a shared way, not leading equals but in a sense leading because I was aware of where to go. Now that sounds autocratic, inevitably. I have repeatedly been disappointed by responses I've got from collective brainstorming, ideas sessions, planning sessions and so on.

The second reason is because it has been the case that every innovation that has taken place since he arrived has either been initiated by him or has been imposed on the school from the outside. He believes that his deputies

> don't have my enthusiasm for change - they are more traditional than I am. The deputies are doing the executive tasks of running the school and they don't want particularly to get involved in the management of the school, to share this role of innovation and the management of change and so on. They do not actually expect to share this function.

The first deputy's view of management relates to the Head's point regarding the deputies carrying out the function of the executive role.

> I think my title as Head of Upper School is a misnomer really. I think one of the dissatisfactions of the role of deputy is, instead of taking time to manage, you find yourself having to do trivial administration. There is no-one to delegate it to, that is the problem. So you end up with days filled with the nuts and bolts that makes the place run smoothly but they really are administrative tasks that have to be done.

The second deputy who is responsible for the curriculum generally finds herself involved in the delivery aspect of the curriculum in an indirect way. This is because she finds herself spending more and more time on administrative tasks.

> The change in management role is the response to outside influence quite honestly. We are bombarded constantly by things we are required to respond to and the paper work, because we have to respond in writing to so many things, has escalated. Sometimes you feel it has gone beyond the point of usefulness. Half my life seems to be spent drafting responses or papers for this, that and the other instead of actually doing anything about it.

The third deputy has the title of the 'Head of Lower School'. As the only senior member of staff on the lower school site he sees himself as:

> a person who carries responsibility of making certain that there is a good communication between upper school and lower school. I am aware that the lower school staff can easily feel out of the main stream. I wouldn't say I was a manager of lower school curriculum, more of an overseer - there needs to be a person with an overview of lower school - which direction we are going in, what changes are taking place and also the means of providing information and communicating with other people.

SUNSHINE MANAGEMENT

Consideration of the Head's relationship with his deputies and his senior teacher and their relationship with him exposes the notion of the senior management team (SMT) as a unit of consensus authority bearing down on the staff as a myth. The differential of power between the Head and the others,

coupled with their lack of enthusiasm to join the Head in embracing innovation and change results in the Head being perceived as 'the power house' and the deputies and the senior teacher seeing their work in terms of the Head's expectations of them. They construct their role within this frame of reference.

In response to the question, 'Do you work as a team?' the first deputy said:

> Let's put it this way. We have good personal relationships between the four of us. The Head's role is different from anyone else. The Head is the person with the real power. I don't feel he pretends the thing is democratic and we come to a consensus. He always listens to arguments for or against certain things but ultimately he is the one and that is right, that is what he is paid for. He is rightly the one that carries the ultimate responsibility and is responsible to the governors and so on. We all work accepting and understanding that.

This deputy's stance in relation to the Head is bureaucratic in that the Head has the legitimate authority and so democracy is not possible. The second deputy also sees the Head as having the ultimate authority and the overall control. This affects the way she performs her role.

> In a school where you have got a laid back headmaster, that gives you much more scope. I hear sometimes about a deputy in a neighbouring school where their new curriculum was very much the work of the curriculum deputy. I start thinking, my God, I am not doing that. I haven't got that kind of Head in that my Head is very involved and so on and therefore to a great extent my job is carrying out his ideas which doesn't give me so much scope to think on my own. I haven't ever had the opportunity and I'm not sure if it ought to be my job to have the opportunity to overlook the whole school.

In working out her role as Curriculum Deputy in relation to him, she bends to his authority and hopes that she has some influence on him.

> In a way I complement the Head in that I see it more from the point of view of the teacher that has got to do the implementation of the curriculum changes. Whereas he sees the overall view, ie it is a good course to introduce and so on, I would be inclined to look to the practicalities.

She therefore does not see the Head and the deputies as equal partners in a team. She sees the Head as the central pivot firmly in the leadership role around which the deputies revolve to refine, discuss and even to play devil's advocate to his strategic planning based on his overview which she, as well as the first deputy is prepared to accept. The third deputy places a lot of emphasis on the Head as the leader of the school.

> He does the preparatory thinking and he has the overview. He's the sort of Head who looks ahead, sees things that come up and almost does your thinking for you. So it is a great help because you haven't got to go through that sort of process.

He sees the Head as a delegator to follow through decisions that, although discussed, have been ultimately taken by the Head.

> He delegates a great deal and leaves you to it. He'll question you about it but generally speaking he will leave you to get on with the jobs he's allocated to you and he'll confidently give you things to take away and do.

When asked about the senior management team the third deputy saw himself as a junior in relation to the other two deputies, the outsider. The geographical location (the split site) does not help to ameliorate the problems of working together in a partnership.

Their belief in hierarchy permeates all their actions and informs the roles they take as supporters and assistants to the Head. It creates a framework for them within which they believe it is appropriate to operate. The politics of the Head's style of leadership is a potent mixture of the managerial style and the inter-personal. Ball (1987) writes that the managerial Head is chief executive of the school, normally surrounded and supported by a senior management team. The Head relates to his staff through his team (and their delegated areas of formal responsibility) and through a formal structure of meetings and committees. Both these responsibilities and structures will be

supported and outlined by written documentation which specifies terms of reference and job descriptions (1987 pg 96). This Head's style of leadership has created a bureaucratic managerial structure. A very detailed staff handbook, job descriptions, school policy documents and the insistence on each department providing a handbook. Through the new teachers' contractural arrangements which stipulate each teacher working for a minimum of 1265 hours, this Head has used the legislation as an opportunity to timetable in regular meetings. He holds regular senior management team meetings on a Monday after school and a timetabled meeting for the team on another day of the week. The senior management meetings are not minuted but he expects feedback in the form of minutes from other school meetings that deputies chair. Ball (1987) reminds us that Weber states that bureaucracy is a form of domination. He goes on to say,

> The Head as person may be viewed as liberal, open, democratic, but management as a system is not. As a solution to the political problem of organisation it errs on the side of the task function and makes it claim for integration on the basis of adherence to legal-rational procedures.

A Parkview example of this approach is the task group meetings that the Head has recently set up in order to address the issues of cross-curricula themes (eg economic awareness, equal opportunities). He expects each group to formulate curriculum policy in their designated area and to provide a written paper on how the problem can be tackled in each subject area.

Ball (1987) continues

> In ideal-typical form these legal-rational procedures ensure that the formalities of consultation are public and visible. In this case it is the Head who recedes from view. It is possible and not uncommon to find the managerial head in the role of desk-bound bureaucrat, administering from behind the closed door of the office. Approaches to the head go through the proper channels, 'by the book'. (page 99)

At Parkview, the Head has effectively set up the structures, legal-rational procedures, which have received support and legitimation from the educational legislative procedures that have taken place nationally. The Head maximises the control factors inherent within that legislation to tune into his administrative system and his management structure. He is able to do this so effectively because he had not retreated/receded from view. In this sense he is not one of Ball's ideal-typical forms. It is because he is NOT but through engaging in a managerial style alongside inter-personal and micro-political skills he is a powerful figure. Bacharach and Lawler's (1980) concept of power helps to explain in what way the Head is powerful in practice.

They distinguish between four sources of power: structural - power as a property of a person's office or structural position; personality - power as a function of personal characteristics, such as charisma or leadership qualities; expertise - power as a function of specialised knowledge or skill or access to information; opportunity - power as a function of the occupancy of roles which, even though they may rank low in the hierarchy, provide the opportunity to exert power through the control of information, or key organisational tasks. The Head at Parkview acesses all these sources of power. In a turbulent and fast changing national educational environment this Head is the school's 'font of knowledge' regarding educational ideas, policies and new directives. Because of the nature of his personality he has inter-personal skills to draw on and the opportunity, because of his position to play politics to achieve his goals which are synonymous with the goals of the school as, in the main, he wrote them!

Hoyle (1986) and Ball (1987) caution against believing that the Head has as much real power as I claim for this Head. However I do believe the empirical data supports my analysis. The Parkview Head exercises his power at the level of influence as well as authority. Bacharach and Lawler define authority as

'that form of power which stems from the legal right to make decisions governing others' and influence as 'that form of power which stems from the capacity to shape decisions by informal and non-authoritative means'. The authority relates to the 'managerial' mode and the influence to the inter-personal/micropolitical mode. After observing a series of senior management team meetings and interviewing many teachers in the school it becomes apparent that his power and influence is felt throughout the staff. The teacher in charge of Special Needs gives a view of the school that is shared by many of the teachers who are not in senior positions.

> The private face of the school is, teachers afraid to speak out about their beliefs, anxious about job security and careers. The Head's room is a power house, all edicts eminate from there. The Head promotes an atmosphere where internal promotion is seen to be a possibility for some. He nurtures certain people and keeps them that way - people who are thankful for being smiled upon and who are not going to stir it with colleagues and dissent publicly but will provide ideas that fit in with his philosophy as well as being good organisers. The Head doesn't like people who disagree with him.

What is interesting to note about the handling of promotions in the school is the case of the development of the Curriculum Team Leaders as a title to replace Heads of Department and Heads of Faculty. The faculty system has been disbanded and seven curriculum areas structured to deliver the national curriculum and the GCSE. The new CTL for languages was an internal appointment organised privately between the Head and the governors. The new CTL in Humanities was also an internal appointment organised publicly in the school but the new CTL in English is an external appointment, publicly advertised. It was the Head in each instance who controlled the set-up for each promotion. In the case of languages and humanities there were male teachers capable of taking on the role who had been doing favours, unpaid, being led to believe that internal promotion was a strong possibility. They both got appointed. In the case of the English appointment there were no internal male contenders but two internal female ones whom he considered not

experienced enough to appoint. The appointment went to an external candidate, a male. The differing approaches to fill the posts with teachers whom the Head favoured shows his ability to play political games to achieve his goals.

Ball (1987) writes:

> Clearly the political interface between the schools and the local authority and national government is of increasing importance. Nevertheless I shall be arguing for the need to explore the different ways in which different organisations cope with and respond differently to greater intervention and pressure from outside.

In terms of the Head's power, authority and influence it is clearly necessary to put it into relationship with outside factors pressing on the school. This Head actively embraces change and is prepared to match his intentions to the spirit of the legislation. He justifies his management style as being necessary to implement the legislation. He uses the fact that the initiatives are imposed to 'encourage' co-operation and the appearance of consensus. He listens sympathetically to the frustrations, anxieties and problems of members of his staff in face to face encounters (his door is always open) and disarmingly agrees with the teacher then says, with a smile, but you have no choice you have to do it.

Sunshine management is what the first deputy calls it ('look sunshine you do it or else!') and he has had enough of it - he has resigned. He discovered he could claim his pension early so after 30 years in education has decided to take it and get out of teaching.

> I think that the Government is dismantling the education system. They want to privatise it and leave a rump of a system. Eventually the children are really going to suffer - all the administration and the other tasks the teachers are expected to do other than teaching is going to undermine the quality of teaching in the classroom and I don't want to be around to see it. The next step is to privatise the meals service, that will be another administrative nightmare that will be as

> bad as the privatised cleaning service which had resulted in senior management spending time doing the kind of jobs that the resident caretaker used to do like checking whether there is toilet paper in dispensers. What is happening is that the day to day things are forgotten. We are so busy recording, reporting, drawing up proposals and development plans, preparing for LMS that we are becoming administrators and financial accountants. Where is the time for people in all this? In fact the Head is actually thinking of not replacing me but using the money to pay for an administrator at a low level to handle the paper work and to buy in another main grade teacher. I am simply confused by it all. I am out of control of what is happening and I feel psychologically defeated.

It is not only the outside pressures that have nudged him into leaving but it is the zeal of the Head for initiatives and the Head's expectations for the deputies to take up the initiatives and implement them. He has found this exhausting and dispiriting.

> An example is the reporting system. The Head initiated a move to change the reporting system. Three years ago I chaired a committee to do this. I spent a lot of time and energy on it. We considered every conceivable design aspect. And now what is happening? It is all being rethought and the curriculum deputy is chairing it this time. The Head wants records of achievement and the national curriculum taken into account and I think he is jumping the gun, trying to get ahead of the field again. He wants to impress the outside community to be seen as a leading school. I don't think it pays to go too fast for the next thing you know McGregor will come out with some prescriptive format and the whole lot will need to be changed again. An analogy to what is happening in this school is 24 hour car rallying. We are trying to keep up at the front in the lead and at the same time we are changing all the fittings in the car, the gear box, the engine and even the wheels. It can't be done. When I came to this school in 1977 I thought I had come to sanity. The school was stable. There were not a lot of changes. I think schools should be stable places. Then when the present Head arrived in 1985, from then on there has been perpetual change. The speed and intensity of the changes has resulted in a sort of 'mayhem'.

The school had a recent county inspection. This is the result of the new role of the Local Education Authority (LEA) advisory service which means more intense and regular inspections of their schools. Parkview was the first county inspection under the new structure and it took place after I had finished my spell of fieldwork in the school. I include reference to it here because many of the findings verify my analysis of a powerful and influential

Head. The inspection lasted for one week and involved over a dozen inspectors in the school at any one time. In the section on staffing and management, the inspectors made the following points.

> 4.1 The current staffing establishment is 60.2 full time equivalents (54 full-time and 11 part-time staff). The school has three deputy heads, one member of staff with an E allowance, 3 with D, 6 with C, 13 with B and 4 with A allowances. There are 30 men and 24 women employed full time and 2 men and 9 women employed part-time. The Head and 2 of the 3 deputies are male as is the senior teacher. Of the 26 A-D allowances 20 are given to men and 6 to women (3 of the A allowance holders - the lowest allowance are women). This leaves 11 men and 28 women on Main Grade.
>
> 4.3 In terms of the age profile of the staff about 10% are under 30 whilst nearly 30% are 50 and over. A number of staff were in the school prior to the founding of the comprehensive in 1975.
>
> 4.4 Two recommendations emerge from this analysis. First, there are too few women in promoted posts. The school should recognise the present discrepancy and, when vacancies occur, seek to redress the balance.

It is of interest to note here, in the light of my comments earlier in this paper about the micropolitics the Head employed to influence the English appointment, that that appointment of another male was made within days of the Head receiving this report. The inspectors report also that

> At present the Head is seen as the sole initiator of change, the strategic planner and the ultimate policy maker. Thus far the philosophy and guiding principles for the school have come almost exclusively from the Head, who is a man of vision, energy and enthusiasm. It is now opportune for the Head to encourage staff at all levels, especially his senior and middle management colleagues, to contribute more vigorously to the strategic planning and overall policy of the school.

What is it possible to surmise from this? How can it be interpreted? Are they saying that the senior and middle management are now interested in being actively involved in the general policy making level of the school? Or is it that the Head is so much in control of the proceedings that the staff opt out of participating at a whole school level? After all is there any point in fighting, if you sense you can't win? As far as the Senior Management is

concerned my analysis has shown them to be acolytes of the Head. But what about the middle managers?

The focus of my study was the implementation of the GCSE, a national examination for all 16 year olds delivered through the subjects of the curriculum. It, therefore, directly targeted on issues that come within the area of responsibility of the CTLs. Their job is to co-ordinate and organise the teaching programmes within their curriculum area and, where necessary, alter existing practices to come into line with new requirements.

In working within the action frame of reference and intent on unravelling the complexities of the situation through discussions with the CTLs, I identified values and ideologies that were not consensual. The teachers talked about their feelings and experiences that highlighted the differences between their view of the situation and others. A bundle of tensions and dichotomies emerged from the analysis of the role of the CTL and their perceptions of managing change. These are explored in the next section.

THE ORGAN GRINDER'S MONKEY

The CTLs perceptions of the source of their concerns in managing change can be categorised into three main areas:

- changing legislation concerning the curriculum, starting with the GCSE and now the introduction of the national curriculum
- the teachers' contract and most specifically the introduction of the 1265 hours ruling
- the Head and the demands he makes on them.

These three factors obviously interconnect in practice but for the purposes of analysis and explanation I have separated them out into three main themes in order to explore in greater detail the internal social dynamics of the situation. The themes are: imposed curricula, legislation and organisational structure.

The data employed comes from interviews conducted with four of the seven curriculum team leaders in the areas of Maths, Science, Technology and Humanities.

The first interviews were unstructured and open-ended asking them to define what managing meant for them and to talk about their experiences in implementing the GCSE. Following analysis of these interviews I returned to them with a write-up of my findings for verification and further exploration of the issues raised. The resultant data draws from both sets of interviews.

Theme 1 - Imposed Curricula

The nature of the school's subject department structure and the high level of classroom autonomy has meant diversity of curriculum content and teaching styles. The CTLs have allowed these diversities to flourish and have accommodated them. The impact of the national criteria (GCSE) and the national curriculum is causing the CTLs to make centralised curriculum decisions that demand a greater conformity in curriculum teaching across classes with different teachers. This is how centralisation is ultimately managed by the CTLs - greater organisation of materials, programmes of study, lesson plans and inter-departmental moderation of teacher based assessments. Diversity is out - conformity is in.

> In the CSE there used to be enormous freedom. That went. There was a certain amount of freedom in the GCE. But as soon as the National Criteria came in (which was really a forerunner to the national curriculum) it was - 'here it is, here is your scheme of work - get on with it!' In the past it was the most difficult thing in the world to give out a scheme of work and to get teachers to conform to it. The teacher, when they closed their classroom door, got on with their own thing, quite definitely. Structures are now being set up that are making that more difficult - particularly recording and reporting. We have actually got a profile that drives the teacher to cover every aspect of the syllabus - you can't manufacture it. (Maths)

> I still think you have diversity in teaching style but what you certainly have not got is any diversity in teaching content. In a way if the content is fairly rigid then it does limit your style as well because you can only teach certain things in certain ways. (Science)

> There still is diversity but a very strong move to conformity. In the old system we knew our aims and objectives but as a head of department I would be happy to let my colleagues find their own way to that point but now national curriculum is going to dictate where we are going to be at certain stages. (Technology)

As well as a sense of loss of autonomy in terms of curriculum content they feel they are being pressurised into a style and mode of teaching that does not sit comfortably with them. An important factor for these CTLs is the number of good examination results the pupils have received in their subject. This sign of excellence is very important for their sense of achievement and self-esteem.

> Examination results despite what some people might say not being the be all and end all of school life it is still very very much accounted for so you have to look to delivering the syllabus to get the best results we can for the pupils and for ourselves ... I think the fact that at our staff meeting at the beginning of term in September, the boss does an analysis of the exam results - everybody wants to appear to be good teachers. It reflects on you whether the results are good or bad. I would like to have been able to say there has been a loosening up of didactic teaching but to be honest I think that would possibly be untrue because to get through the syllabus that we have to cover it has got to be teacher led rather than pupil investigation. (Technology)

This emphasis on the change of teaching style to more active pupil involvement is problematic among the teachers who see that the good work they have done in the past as being undervalued for the sake of 'trendy' new ideas. The CTL of Science feels this strongly.

> It really annoys me that what you were doing in the past is not just old-fashioned but is positively wrong and shouldn't have been taught that way. It applies to everyone in education. You get a bit fed up feeling that they are undervaluing what has been done in the past. They seem to value what you are doing now because it is new and trendy but I thought what we were doing was pretty good at the time. If you are a teacher now and you are fairly didactic in your process of teaching you might have a really successful lesson but I am sure that if you had an inspector sat there you'd be panned by the way you were delivering it even though the kids might enjoy it, really learn a lot, might do well in the examinations. I think this trendiness in education is really ruining education.

The dichotomy appears to be about retaining the good product whilst being seen to engage in a more pupil orientated process.

> I am quite happy with things changing but particularly with the GCSE I said to myself, whatever happens my pupils will not get worse grades. So I've tended to be quite traditional so far. As an area we are aware of the necessary changes but also as we are experienced people we are a little cautious about the desire to change for changes sake whilst at the same time aware that changes need to occur. So we are happy to accommodate them wherever possible. (Humanities)

The curriculum structure is presented to the teachers. Values are implicit - curriculum is culturally defined and the prescriptive nature of what constitutes the curriculum is seen as given and as neutral; the consensus of the educationalists. In practice, however, in teaching the material it is apparent that the teachers face a dichotomy between their values and beliefs about what constitutes good teaching and the preferred view that enamates from the Headteacher and the LEAs' curriculum policy statements. CTLs have to cope with their own and their departments' individual value stances and create a climate of accommodating the differences in order to achieve a semblance of consensus and harmony within the department for outside consumption.

Theme 2 - Legislation

The teachers' contract, introduced in 1987 states the work that teachers are required to do and the minimum hours 1265 within which they have to do it. For many teachers this has been seen as a sleight to curtail their autonomy and an attack on their sense of professionalism.

> In the past if you asked a teacher to do something over and above his normal teaching then, without hesitation he would turn round and say yes, I'll do it. Unfortunately the majority of staff to-day would look seriously at the situation before they would say yes. This has been caused by teachers' contracts and as far as I am concerned, lack of negotiating rights over our salary. We still want to be seen as doing a professional job but I'd define professionalism differently now than four years ago. Four years ago I would define it as doing what I could for the school and the pupils. Now, professionalism is doing what I'm asked to do in my contract. The way I look at it - if I have got a contract with 14 items on it and each one I am responsible for, I will fulfil those because it is a contract and I am professional enough to think that I am being paid to that contract and so I will work to that contract. I put boundaries around my job because people put boundaries around me. (Technology)

The views of the CTL for technology were similarly expressed by many other teachers in the school and seen to be a major problem when it came to the CTLs asking members of the department to do something that was not strictly speaking assigned to them as part of their job specification. This raised the dichotomy between the notion of professional and the notion of paid employee of the authority. The Humanities CTL articulates the concern for all of them.

> I believe in professionalism and I believe that when you are a teacher the day doesn't stop at 4.00 pm. It is more than the defined job. This is where job descriptions are useless in teaching. You can define someone's role but you can't define the working relationship and that, to my mind, is what professionalism is all about. Once Baker imposed time budgets he shattered teaching relationships well and truly because people now say during a meeting, 'sorry it is 5.15 pm I have to go'. You have people who stay for meetings and come to non-pupil contact days because they are told to and just switch off, don't contribute and make snide comments still, about not wanting to be there. It really affects our working relationships. There is a limit to what I can ask them to do. I have to handle that very carefully. (Humanities)

Theme 3 - Organisational Demands

In relation to their position in the organisation, the CTLs perceive their role as

- piggy in the middle (Maths)
- it is very much a two-way process, you get shunted in both directions (Humanities)
- being answerable in both directions. I'm trying to make decisions that are acceptable to senior management and at the same time be accepted by those lower down in the school (Science)

Science and Technology perceive a gap, a sense of alienation between middle management and gave as the main reason the fact that the deputies teach only half a timetable. They saw the traditional deputy role as they knew it, that of a link between the Head and the staff as having disappeared.

> It is almost as though the CTL is put in the role that was carried out by the deputy head - that of someone that can give useful advice without laying it on the line officially to the Head. (Technology)

Hence, they have a tension to contend with - that of being both controller and being controlled.

They are expected to act as controllers in the sense of being responsible for their subject area, overseeing, co-ordinating and administrating without feeling that they have any real power and all the time feeling they are being controlled by the Head directly or indirectly through delegated authority to his senior managers. The CTLs, in interview, talked about the issues that arose as a result of this dichotomy. I shall focus on three major issues by citing an example of each.

The first centres around the issue of finance and resources. The Head negotiates the level of allowances to each subject area on an individual basis. Each CTL makes a bid and awaits the outcome. Negotiating and bargaining go on and all have a sense that one area may be doing better at the expense of another - usually their own!

> The bidding system has advantages I am sure for the school as a whole but then again it is down to personalities. If you have a CTL who is forceful, eloquent and can put an argument well, he comes off better than someone else who is not so eloquent. I am sure we have discrepancies. It depends on the attitude of senior management to subject areas. At the moment I am negotiating with the Head for a course on micro-electronics. I am bidding against other people's budgets. If I can persuade the boss it is a good thing then there is a very good chance it will go ahead - that is the way of the world. (Technology)

The CTL for Mathematics is convinced that as the Head likes to make an impression with the local authority and the community as an innovative Head, he favours new and innovative aspects of the curriculum with money.

> Financial limitations are placed on us. There are lots of problems, lack of materials for teachers in the area, lack of textbooks, practical equipment and I have complaints all the time from teachers that they do not have enough of this or that and yet we get a very large slice of the cake it appears. If you are in an attractive subject - one leading the initiatives - you get a better slice of the cake - the resource based learning for example.

The bidding system is repeated within the curriculum areas with the CTL being the final arbiter. The Science CTL explained how this has faced him with a dichotomy.

> At the moment this department is overspent. Some teachers feel they have a responsibility for allocation of funds to each teacher. I felt that with national curriculum we needed to spend money in certain areas. I've gone ahead and done that and now find we've overspent. Some teachers feel they have responsibility for their subject (Chemistry, biology etc) and haven't had the money they should have had because I've gone and spent it on other people. As a result I got on the wrong side of my department because they thought I had not been fair, I got on the wrong side of the Head because I've overspent and of course we have half a term to go with no money.

The second concerns the effect, responding and implementing of whole school policy that eminates from the Head, has on the CTLs. The general attitude towards change in the school could be described as thoughtful and controlled. No curriculum area could be accused of not adjusting to the demands of the GCSE and now the national curriculum but the changes are measured and moderated. The CTLs manage change by accommodating it bit by bit into their established structures. The Maths CTL talked about his approach to handling the situation. He responds to it very pragmatically, seeing the nature of imposition as actually making his job easier in terms of his relationship with his department.

> In times gone by there would be unnecessary tension in the department meeting if you tried to bring in an innovation that was not imposed from 'above'. If we had had this conversation in the past I would be telling you that part of my role ad HOD, in order to introduce change, would be to 'sell' ideas to members of my department. I had to work at persuading and convincing them to take on new practices. I had to win some of them round in the first place, to do a bit of lobbying to get people to speak on my behalf so that together we could try to turn the others around. Quite a bit of political intrigue and fighting would go on as people defended their interests. You don't need to do that now. Now there is no choice. I've met little resistance to change now that it has got to be done - well, it has the Secretary of State's signature on it. It has made my job easier. I don't need to be an innovator so much as a good organiser of the process of implementation. It is enough to be the organ grinder's monkey! (Maths)

This view of lack of need to be innovative is echoed in the words of the Science CTL. However he does not see it as making his job easier. He sees it as more of a loss of control, having to respond to other people's ideological interests.

> I feel I am managing the department from the point of view of doing all the donkey work but I never really feel that what goes on in Science is something that I have developed from the word go. The fact that I do double science now - we were one of the first schools - I suppose tht was a decision we made as a department but the initial prompting came from the Head and from county. We went along quicker than other schools so from that point of view I suppose I had a fair bit of control as to the speed it was implemented but really as to having a great deal of influence on the curriculum in the school, I don't think I have. You can possibly dot the Is and cross the Ts but really regards policy - it comes from above and there is very little we can do to influence it now. (Science)

The third issue relates to coping with an intensification of administrative work. Administrative overload is exacerbated by the organisational structure set up by the Head under the new system. The Head has a number of allowances allocated to his school and has the freedom to decide how he allocates them in terms of priorities. He has used the allowances to move from a faculty structure to a curriculum area structure. The allowance for a CTL is the C allowance. The Head has chosen not to make a priority a deputy CTL allowance as such so the CTLs, who have heavy teaching loads, find that they are increasingly being asked to give written responses to more and more documentation from the Head and find that the 'buck stops at them'.

> I've got people in my department who contribute more than MPG and there is no way of rewarding them. This makes it difficult for me to ask these people to do anything. Well, they might say no so I have to be careful. I don't want to destroy the working relationship I have. (Technology)

> Humanities is a bit of an odd ball situation in that just about everybody is experienced, most of them are important people in different areas as well. I have a deputy head, senior teacher and two year heads in my curriculum aren. The Head of Geography has an allowance and I am History. Unfortunately the Head of RE is an MPG and really you can't blame her for saying, why should I? The position she is in rubs her up the wrong way. So as I like to show myself as efficient and that I am good at what I do, I do it myself. Spreading tasks out is not something I am good at and the 'politics' of the department is such that it makes it difficult. I am still learning how to manage this. (Humanities)

> I do find it a problem - the lack of infrastructure in the department. Let me give you an example. We were asked to produce a first year report, a new report for national curriculum. The Head wanted it in a particular style. He gave us a deadline. I handed it over to my head of science in lower school who is not being financially awarded for the job. He hands it in and the deputy head of curriculum (who has her instructions from the Head) tells him it is not good enough. So I am right in the middle. This chap who works for me in a way puts in a lot of effort into it and it is turned down by senior management. So I go back to him and say - could he work on it? He didn't lose his temper but said, 'Look I am not paid for this - why don't you do it?'. I persuade him to try it again. I don't want to put too much pressure on him but I am under pressure if someone says, 'I am not going to do it', there isn't much I can do but I couldn't go to the boss and tell him what has happened. It is part of my job description. Once in my job description and I sign it ... He is trying to create managers whose real job is to teach and no way can you do both well. There is no time and no money. Everything is done on the cheap. Managing a curriculum area is certainly done on the cheap. (Science)

Conclusion

> Institutions are to be judged on the good or harm they do individuals.
>
> Bertrand Russell

In Parkview school the CTLs strongly felt tensions and the dichotomies these indicate have not expressed themselves in overt micropolitical acts to assert their interests. However there is a clear indication that the teachers manage by using strategies that encourage co-operation instead of hierarchical managerial style procedures, relying on using influence instead of authority to persuade department members to work with them to deliver the curriculum that is being asked of them by the Head, the governors and the LEA. The formal directives come to them from the Head and the way they handle these is through interpersonal processes, stressing collegiality, offering in return to act as a mediator between their staff and the senior management team. Their approach is, 'I am really one of you with the same problems and anxieties except that I am being paid to organise and administrate'. There is no time for anything else. They find themselves in a spiral of intensification of work (Apple 1986).

There is the 'business' of administration, teaching, marking, recording, examining, responding to directives, planning formal meetings, writing minutes, restructuring courses and keeping up to date with new curriculum matters. They harbour fear of failure to come up with the 'goods' (examination results). The pace of change coming from both the national situation and the innovative Head allows little time for thought and reflection. They constantly refer to the lack of time they have to size up the implications of what is happening, to discuss with other teachers and to

articulate a view. All of these activities are crucial in order to amass support and strategically plan ways of presenting an alternative to the prevailing order. Frustrations are felt, anxiety grows but there is little time for the kind of talk that can lead to action to promote change in an alternative direction to that propounded by the Head. Because of contract hours, there is a series of meetings timetabled for teachers. This means that they are unwilling or unable to attend unscheduled meetings. Formal meetings have an agenda and are inclined to deal with administrative issues. The meetings are in cycles occurring once every four weeks. The agenda are so full of information giving and handing out of tasks that discussions on educational issues, curriculum ideological issues, questioning of decisions made are not discussed openly or aired. Senses of grievances are smothered and only dealt with through the aggrieved negotiating directly with the Head.

Lukes (1974) three dimensional view of power allows consideration of the many ways in which potential issues are kept out of politics whether through the operation of social forces and institutional practices or through individual decisions. This may occur in the absence of actual, observable conflict, which may have been successfully averted - though there remains an implicit reference to potential conflict. This potential however may never in fact be actualised (page 24). I feel this is pertinent to the situation in which the CTLs find themselves. It is obvious that they do not feel part of a consensus with the dominant hierarchical power structure within the organisation. This comes through and is manifest in the range of dichotomies they see themselves as confronting.

Viewing the implementation of change from a micro-political perspective highlights the degree to which the teachers within the school have

experienced, over the last three years, a loss of freedom of expression and sense of autonomy. The heads of department in their new role of curriculum team leaders have become curriculum managers and deliverers instead of curriculum initiators. The teachers are keenly aware of the fact that this has happened but display a sense of powerlessness to do anything about it. Here we have professional compliance. Is this the first stage towards the teacher as technical worker?

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